



## THIS WEEK IN IRAQ

The Official Newsletter of the Multi-National Force - Iraq

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# Security Success Continues

**BAGHDAD** — Despite the recent draw-down of coalition troops in Iraq, violence levels continue to drop as Iraqi Security Forces grow in competency and size, a senior coalition spokesman said Aug. 7.

Throughout the past few weeks, Coalition forces have drawn down troop numbers in Iraq. The last of the five original surge brigades, two Marine battalions and an Australian battle group have redeployed without the need for replacements, said Navy Rear Adm. Patrick Driscoll.

At the same time, Iraqi forces have grown by more than 148,000 troops, and the Sunni Muslim “Sons of Iraq” citizen security groups are more than 100,000 members strong, Driscoll said.

“This [Iraqi forces surge] explains how we can continue to see very low levels of violence even though [Coalition forces] have taken away a lot of combat power based,” he said.

Recent Iraqi-led operations in Basra have allowed the local citizens to regain control of their city. The operations drove the insurgency - mostly Iranian-backed

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A U.S. Soldier and Iraqi soldier play with a child for a moment as his family speaks with the Iraqi Army and coalition forces about activity in their local area July 29, 2008 in the Al Jazeera desert of Balad, Iraq. Photo by Staff Sgt. Micky Bazaldua.

## This Week in News ...

**Vigilance Provides Peace in Baghdad**



**Large Drug Bust in Southwest Anbar**



## Future Looks Bright for Ramadi Youth

**RAMADI** — Nearly 3,000 school-aged children from various neighborhoods in Ramadi joined recently for the city’s inaugural Ramadi Youth Conference; one more sign the region is on the right road to recovery after years of intense violence.

The city’s officials, in conjunction with the Embedded Provincial Reconstruction Team-Ramadi and 1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 1, hosted the conference at the south Ramadi indoor olympic gym, July 21-24, 2008, to help improve the children’s future.

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